

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANTANA 01404 260430Z
ACTION SP-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 EB-08 HA-05 OES-09 L-03 SS-15
INR-10 /063 W
-----057960 260451Z /17
R 251427Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 787

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, XA
SUBJ: FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY TOWARD AFRICA

REF: STATE 183658

1. IN VIEW OF LACK OF DIRECT GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT
BILATERAL AID AT THIS POST SINCE 1975, I HAVE NO
AFRICAN EXPERIENCE IN AID FIELD ON WHICH TO BASE ANY
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN OVERALL STRATEGY. AS FAR AS THE
TWO COUNTRIES TO WHICH I AM ACCREDITED ARE CONCERNED,
MY RECOMMENDATION WOULD BE EMPHASIS ON BHN FOR
MADAGASCAR AND BUDGETARY SUPPORT FOR THE COMOROS, IF
AND WHEN WE INITIATE NEW AID PROGRAMS. MY RATIONALI-
ZATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

2. MADAGASCAR: THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF AID COMING IN
FROM ABROAD NOW IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRIAL
FIELDS AND RELATIVELY LITTLE IN THE BHN FIELD. RATHER
THAN COMPETE WITH THE SOVIETS, CHINESE, AND WEST
EUROPEANS IN INFRASTRUCTURE, I WOULD LIKE TO SEE US
PARTICIPATE IN A PROGRAM WHICH WOULD HAVE AN EARLY AND
VISIBLE IMPACT ON RURAL POPULATIONS. I ALSO THINK THIS
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WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO HIGHLIGHT THE RETURN ON AMERICAN
AID. ONE POSSIBILITY WOULD BE TO EXPAND THROUGH
SUBSIDIES THE PRESENTLY SMALL CHURCH WORLD SERVICE (CWS)
PROGRAM WHICH IS ESTABLISHING VILLAGE-LEVEL WATER
SUPPLY SYSTEMS, OR EVEN TO COMPLEMENT IT WITH A
SIMILAR DIRECT AID PROGRAM. I HAVE BEEN MOST IMPRESSED
IN MY OUTINGS AT DEDICATION CEREMONIES OF CWS PROJECTS

WITH THE IMPACT THESE MODEST AND INEXPENSIVE PROJECTS HAVE ON THE LIVES OF THE VILLAGERS AFFECTED AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE NUMBER OF SUCH PROJECTS MULTIPLIED.

3. COMOROS: THIS POOR COUNTRY DOES NOT LACK WILLING DONORS FOR ALL TYPES OF PROJECTS, AND BECAUSE IT IS SO SMALL, IT DOES NOT TAKE MUCH IN THE WAY OF ASSISTANCE TO GO A LONG WAY. HOWEVER, MOST DONORS (UNDP, WHO, FED, CANADIANS, ITALIANS, ETC.) DO NOT PROVIDE FOR THE INTERNAL COSTS OF THEIR PROJECTS. THE FORMER COMORIAN REGIME, OVERTHROWN MAY 13, THEREFORE HAD TO TURN DOWN PROJECTS WHICH WOULD HAVE PROVIDED FOREIGN TECHNICIANS AND ALL NECESSARY IMPORTED MATERIALS SIMPLY BECAUSE IT COULD NOT AFFORD TO MEET THE LOCAL EXPENSES INVOLVED. IF AND WHEN WE ESTABLISH WORKING RELATIONS WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT, A GOOD WAY FOR U.S. AID TO HAVE AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT, AT A LOW COST IN ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL, WOULD BE BY HELPING TO FINANCE WORTHWHILE PROJECTS BEING HELD UP BY COMORIAN LACK OF MEANS.BARRETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANTANA01404
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780306-0018
Format: TEL
From: ANTANANARIVO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780721/aaaaarkw.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3907e76c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SP
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 183658
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1889432
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY TOWARD AFRICA
TAGS: ECON, XA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3907e76c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014